NILGIRI WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION'S EFFORTS AND WORK IN CONSERVATION OF NATURAL WEALTH OF THE NILGIRIS.

1. In the years 1981 and 1982 there was a proposal to set up an Industrial unit (electroplating unit) by a private company in Masinagudi area. This would have resulted in heavy pollution of water sources in this area. This would have been detrimental to wildlife. Our Association took up the matter with the party and also officials concerned which resulted in dropping of this project.

2. Our Association was instrumental in organising a workshop at Vazhaithottam, with Government Departments concerned on 'Electric fencing' utilising the services of Mr.R.L.Piesse from Australia, an expert on this subject. This resulted in introducing 'Electric fencing' method in the Nilgiris, to reduce the human - animal conflict.

3. In the year 94-95, there was a proposal by TNEB to construct a mini hydro electric project in Kallar Pallam area of The Nilgiris. Our Association took up this matter with the Government of Tamilnadu and TNEB and impressed upon them to cancel this project, disastrous to wildlife and Natural wealth. Government acceded to the Associations' appeal and dropped the project.

4. In the year 1996, a proposal to lay a pucca road to connect Siriur to Thengumarada in Nilgiris Forest (North Division) and beyond was mooted again.(This proposal which was first thought of in 1981 -- 82 and was stopped by NWLEA by taking up this with the Government). This proposal was objected to by NWLEA, placing before the Government how this road project would spell doom to this unspoilt wilderness and unique nature of the forests and wildlife in this area. The proposal did not materialise.

5. NWLEA, had actively involved itself in the creation of Mukurthi National Park for Nilgiri Tahr and this National Park was created in the year 1982. Further, the Association did a detailed survey of the adjoining areas of the National Park, where Tahr population are regularly seen, and submitted proposal for the extension of boundary of the existing National Park to include habitats/areas out side the Park. The proposal has been accepted by the authorities concerned, awaiting implementation.

6. NWLEA, has been pressing for inclusion of Sigur and Singara ranges adjoining Mudumalai wildlife sanctuary under the wildlife wing for better management of wildlife. Government of Tamilnadu issued an order GO.No.216 dt. 23.7.1998, including the above two reserve forest areas under the control of wildlife wing of Forest Department. But before this order could be implemented, vested interests went to Madras High Court with a writ petition challenging the Government order. Our Association has impleaded itself a party in this matter before the court, praying for the implementation of the Government order. Hearing on this matter is yet to take place and the Association will vigorously pursue this matter in the court.

7. NWLEA was actively involved in the organisation of a workshop on steps to control poaching (at Theppakadu) in March 1998 in which Government departments, NGOs from, Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka participated. The idea of establishing anti-poaching camps in many sensitive areas of Mudumalai sanctuary, which was in the offing, got a fillip after this, and many camps have been established resulting in reduction of poaching of elephants and other animals. Prior to the above, for many years, the Association was gathering intelligence on the illegal activities in these areas and passing on vital information to the wildlife wing and other Forest Divisions. Even today whenever, information about poaching activities not

alone with in the District and also across the border is obtained, such information is given promptly to the authorities concerned.

8. The proposal to put up a 50 M.W. " Moyar ultimate stage Hydro Electric Project" was dropped by TNEB in November 98. While this proposal was in active consideration of the Electricity Department, NWLEA, appealed to the Government to give up this proposal, because the works connected with this project would have resulted in widening, deepening and concrete lining the channel. This would have resulted in great difficulties to the Elephants to cross this channel and particularly prove fatal to young ones. The Government accepted our appeal.

9. In the year 1998, a proposal to build a Hydro Electric Project in the Pandiyar –Punnampuzha river system was revived by TNEB with modifications in the original plan,(of 1980s) which would have resulted in submergence and destruction of a part of Mudumalai Sanctuary and also part of forest areas of Gudalur Division. NWLEA took up this matter with all concerned and presented a vivid picture of disastrous consequences. In this matter, the Honorable Minister of power, Government of India was met by our Associations' representative. It is understood that beyond a survey of the area in question, no further progress is made in putting up this project.

10. In the year 1999, there was a proposal to put up a Samathuvapuram in Mavinallah near Masinagudi village. If this had materialised, lot of problem would have been created for wildlife and the forests surrounding this area which is already under severe biotic pressure. NWLEA submitted an appeal to the Hon.Chief Minister of Tamilnadu to cancel this project in the sensitive area. Consequent to this, it is understood that the proposal to put up Samathuvapuram in Mavinallah has been dropped.

11. When a controversy with regard to Makhna Elephant (which was captured in Gudalur, and subsequently rehabilitated at Theppakadu), was stirred up

by a foreign National with ulterior motives (staying at that time near Mudumalai) which become an international issue, tarnishing the image of Forest Department and Wild life wing of our state, the Association launched an equally aggressive campaign utilising the print and electronic media to put the whole matter in correct perspective to counter all the ill found allegations of that foreign national. Also the Association wrote to the central Government and State Government in this matter. A letter of appreciation was received from the then, Hon. Minister of Forests and Environment, Government of India. By our efforts, the sting of her activities was eliminated. Further, Thirumathi Maneka Gandhi Hon Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, visited Theppakadu. (with pressure from vested interests to shift this animal to Karnataka) to ascertain the facts and truths in this issue. Members of the Association called on the Honorable Minister during her visit and elucidated her of various steps and efforts taken by the wildlife wing of Forest Department of our state, in treating and rehabilitating the Makhna. She was cleared of any doubts on this issue and she was fully satisfied with the state of the animal. The Makhna is at present in Theppakudu, as any other normal one.

12. Anti-poaching camps have been established in sensitive areas of Mudumalai sanctuary and temporary anti-poaching watchers (from tribals) are employed by the wildlife wing. Because their employment is of temporary nature, the Association has insured them (at present 39 persons) under Janatha Insurance scheme of New India Assurance Company Ltd. paying the premium amount of Rs.60/- per person from the funds of the Association. In the event of any unforeseen and unfortunate happenings such as death or disablement, the insured person or his family will get a maximum compensation of Rs. One lac. (for permanent disablement, the amount will be on pro-rata basis). The association believes that this small gesture would be of some help to the needy and this reflects, the

Associations' commitment to the well being of personnel who work for the cause of conservation.

13. The Association organises, annually, census of animals in various Forest Divisions and wildlife sanctuaries and national park of the District, as required by the Forest Department. Also, the Association does habitat survey, Bird survey and other allied activities in cooperation and coordination with Forest Department of the District. This enables updating of various components of conservation, thereby taking appropriate steps in better management and conservation of natural wealth. Members of Association are also involved in Tiger census in Periyar Tiger Reserve, Thekkady, Bird census in Chinnar, Tahr census in Eravikulam regularly as invitees. In March 2000, our members on invitation, participated in Black Buck census and Bird survey at Point Calimere sanctuary. In the past also, our members took part in such activities.

The above activities, result in better understanding of problems in other areas, and interaction with various groups of people enabling one to get different points of view which are shared with persons concerned for improvement all around.

14. Annually, the Forest training College, Coimbatore conducts a competition for ACF trainees on a particular topic. The papers would be evaluated and prizes are awarded to the chosen articles. Prize money of Rs.1000/- every year would be provided by NWLEA from Associations fund.

15. Every year during wildlife week celebrations, for College and School students of the District, competitions in various disciplines (Painting, Quiz, Elocution) are held by Forest Department involving our members and books worth of about Rs.5000/- are donated by NWLEA from their funds.

16. In the past 5 years, with funding from HADP, about 40 "Eco awareness" camps were conducted in various parts of the District for school children,

villagers and general public, to impart knowledge to the participants about the need and necessity to protect and conserve our natural wealth and environment. These camps were well attended and brought out the desired results.

17. In the year 1999 (Tiger Year) with financial assistance from DFO (North Division) three camps were conducted in two villages and a school in Kotagiri area.

18. In 1998, NWLEA was associated with Forest Department (North Division) in the formation of 'Longwood Shola Watch Dog' Committee, involving committed persons form that area to protect the Longwood Shola, which provides drinking water to 16 surrounding villages.

19. In the past 5 years, NWLEA, commissioned various studies, concerning, environment, ecology and wildlife of the Nilgiris, by engaging competent research scholars. These projects were funded by Forest Department, HADP and private persons. The finding of these studies had been communicated to the authorities concerned for implementation for betterment of environment and habitat of animals. The studies carried out are:-

    1. Phytosociological changes of Shola and Grassland Eco systems Due to human interference.

    2. Energy usage pattern in communities of Nilgiri plateau.

    3. Habitat analysis of Nilgiri Tahr in Nilgiris.

Apart from the above, 2 projects are being carried out in Indira Gandhi National Park Pollachi Viz.,

1. Distribution patterns and relative abundance of wild animals in Indira Gandhi Wildlife sanctuary.

2. WGDP – Wildlife research studies on wildlife ecology -- status survey - habitat use.

These projects are carried out in close coordination and guidance of Wildlife Warden, Pollachi.

20. In the month of September 99, when the threat of foot and mouth disease spreading to wild ungulates in North Forest Division and adjoining Mudumali, due to infected cattle grazing in R.F.s, NWLEA actively involved itself in inoculation of the cattle, by coordinating this activity with the Forest Department, Animal Husbandry Department, AVIN and HADP. Thus the dreaded disease was contained from spreading and wild animals were saved.

21. When, in August 99, Supreme Court gave judgement in the matter of Gudalur Janmam Land, NWLEA, has written to the Government of Tamilnadu, and departments concerned with a plea to take steps to get the unplanted Forest areas under the control of the plantation companies back to Forest Department to save the richly endowed Forest areas.

22. NWLEA publishes Tahr Newsletter (quarterly). This publication contains articles and information on environment and ecology and wildlife.

23. In the year 1998, NWLEA published a book titled 'Some South Indian Butterflies'. This was received very well by scientific community and layman as well.

(A.C. SOUNDARARAJAN)
Vice President
Nilgiri Wild Life and
Environment Association

CONSTITUTION OF THE NILGIRI WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
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1. The name of the Association shall be the Nilgiri Wildlife and Environment Association.

2. The registered office of the Association shall be located in Udhagamandalam or at such place as may be determined by the Executive Committee.

3. The objects of the Association shall be:

(1) The preservation of Wildlife and conservation of Nature and natural resources of the Nilgiris.

(2) The preservation of the Natural Nilgiri Environment.

(3) The preservation of the Nilgiri Biosphere.

In pursuance of these objectives:

a. To disseminate knowledge of wildlife and promote wildlife preservation consciousness.

b. To encourage and promote the study of Nature, particularly wildlife.

c. To promote ecological and environmental awareness and encourage and participate in studies, research, collection of data and dissemination of knowledge of these subjects.

d. To engage in any activity aimed to preserve the environment and the ecosystem of the Nilgiris, in its widest sense.

e. To organise treks, tours, camps, lectures, shows, competitions etc., aimed at promoting knowledge of wildlife and conservation of Nature.

f. To undertake surveys, research studies and breeding projects of wildlife and assist in any project, survey, research and study of wildlife.

g. The introduction, preservation and management of species of wild animals and birds not resident in the District and the acquisition, import, export and exchange of any species of wildlife in or out of the District.

h. To participate in projects involving native as well as exotic fauna and flora.

i. To lease or otherwise acquire any piece of water from any source whatever and control and manage its fishery and the fishing therein.

j. To involve itself in any effort of action independently or in conjunction with any other body or authority, aimed to preserve wildlife, conserve nature and project the environment, improve its quality and promote its amenity.

k. To act in any advisory capacity and assist in the management of wildlife and the environment.

l. To maintain libraries and reading room.

m. To purchase, take or lease or hire or otherwise acquire any movable or immovable property or any rights or privileges necessary or convenient for any purposes of the Association and to construct, alter and keep in repair and maintain any movable or immovable property required of, used by or for the Association.

n. To sell, improve, manage, develop, lease mortgage, charge, exchange, dispose of or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property and assets of the Association.

o. To borrow, raise any money required for the purpose of the Association and to lend, deposit and deal with the moneys of the Association.

p. To receive grants, donations and other forms of assistance in cash or in kind from any source or sources.

q. To do all such other lawful things as may be incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

4. CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP:

There shall be the following classes of membership:

a. Life Members

b. Ordinary Members

c. Institutional Members

d. Student Members

e. Honorary Members

f. Ex-officio Members.

a. Persons paying a life membership donation may be admitted to the membership of the Association for life.

b. Ordinary members are those who are admitted to the ordinary membership of the Association on payment of a subscription that shall be fixed by the Association at an Annual General Meeting from time to time.

c. Schools, colleges and other institutions may be admitted as Institutional members on payment of a subscription that shall be fixed by the Association at the Annual General Meeting from time to time.

d. Students of schools and colleges and other institutions and research scholars may be admitted as Student members on payment of subscription that shall be fixed by the Association at the Annual General Meeting from time to time.

e. The Executive Committee may invite such persons as it thinks desirable to become Honorary Members of the Association. Such Honorary Members shall not be required to pay any subscription.

f. The Committee may invite officials, MLAs, MLCs, and MPs and members of local bodies to become Ex-officio members. Such members shall be members by virtue of their office. Such members will not be required to pay any subscription.

5. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

a. Any member may by giving notice in writing resign his membership.

b. A member shall cease to ba a member of the Association by failure to pay the annual subscription or pay any other dues to the Association after two notices in writing one of which shall be by registered post sent at intervals of one month.

c. The Executive Committee may terminate the membership of an Honorary Member or Ex-officio Member without assigning any reason therefor.

d. Membership may be terminated for any other reason as may be considered valid by the Executive Committee. No resolution terminating membership shall be deemed to have been passed unless it has the support of three fourths of the members of the Executive Committee. A member whose membership is terminated by the Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal to the General Body where a three fourths majority of the members present in person or by proxy shall be required to confirm the termination of membership.

6. MANAGEMENT:

a. The management of the affairs of the Association shall vest in an Executive Committee consisting of the President, who shall be the Collector (the administra--tive head of the Nilgiris District by whatever name called) one Vice-President and not more than 13 members of whom 4 shall be officials, including such officer or officers who may be required by Government to be nominated to the Committee.

b. The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt to it not more than 6 members whose term shall expire along with that of the Executive Committee.

c. The Executive Committee may invite any Member to attend Committee Meetings.

7. POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

a. The Executive Committee shall exercise all the powers conferred on the Association by Article 3 of these articles, and shall have the power to do all such acts and things as the Association is required by these articles to be done necessarily by the Association in General Meeting.

b. Without prejudice to the generality of the powers thus conferred under Article 7 (a) the Committee shall have power to:

i. Admit or reject application for membership.

ii. Fix rates of subscription subject to confirmation by a General Body Meeting.

iii. Fill vacancies that might occur on the Committee between one election and another by co-option.

iv. To determine who shall be entitled to sign on behalf of the Association bills, notes, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, cheques, releases, contracts and documents.

v. To delegate, subject to such conditions as they think fit, any of their powers to a Sub-Committee or Sub-Committees, of whom atleast, one member shall be a member of the Executive Committee, as they may deem expedient and to make such regulations as to the proceedings of such Sub-Committees as they may deem proper.

vi. From time to time to provide for the management of the affairs of the Association in such a manner as they may think fit and in particular to appoint any person or persons with such powers including powers to sub-delegate and upon such terms as may be thought fit.

vii. From time to time to make, vary and repeal bye-laws for the conduct of the affairs of the Association, its officers and servants, such action being subject to confirmation by a General Body Meeting.

8. OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND THEIR APPOINTMENT:

a. The Collector of the Nilgiris (the administrative head of the District by whatever name called) for the time being, shall be the President of the Association and Chairman of its Executive Committee.

b. Ten non official members of the Association who shall be elected by the Annual General Meeting to serve on the Executive Committee.

c. Four official members of the Executive Committee would be nominated by the Executive Committee.

d. All paying members standing for election to the Executive Committee shall file their nominations of intention to stand for election atleast eight days before the date of the AGM. In the event of delay in receipt of their intention, the post mark of their letter will be considered.

e. The fully constituted Executive Committee shall appoint from amongst its members, the Vice-President, the Secretary and may in addition appoint a Treasurer, if so desired.

9. PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE:

a. The Committee may meet to transact business, adjourn and otherwise regulate its meetings and proceedings as the Committee thinks fit.

b. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be not less than seven.

c. Vice-President in the absence of the President shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee. In the absence of both the President and the Vice-President, the members present shall choose one amongst themselves to be the Chairman for that meeting.

d. Subject to any special directions which may be made from time to time by the President, atleast seven days prior notice of a meeting of the Committee shall be given to the members.

e. Every member of the Executive Committee, including a co-opted member, shall have one vote. Members invited to attend meetings shall not have voting rights. In the event of equality of votes, the President shall have a casting vote.

10. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT:

The Committee shall keep books of accounts and prepare a statement of receipts and expenditure and a balance sheet

and have them audited annually and present them to the General Body at the Annual General Meeting.

11. GENERAL MEETINGS:

a. The quorum for a General Meeting shall not be less than 14 members present and voting.

b. Not less than twenty one days notice of General Meetings shall be given to members, which shall specify the day, hour, place and the purpose of the meeting.

c. Minutes of all proceedings of General Meetings shall be entered in the books kept for the purpose.

12. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

A meeting generally known as the Annual General Meeting shall be held, within 6 months of closing of the Annual Accounts to consider the annual report and accounts presented by the Committee, the Auditor's report of the accounts of the Association to elect a Committee for the ensuing year, to fix the rate of subscriptions and to transact such other business as may be included in the Agenda for the meetings.

13. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING:

a. The Committee may at any time call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association.

b. The Committee shall within one month after receipt of a requisition in writing from not less than 30 members setting out the matter to be discussed call such a meeting after giving the usual 21 days notice.

14. VOTING AT COMMITTEE AND GENERAL MEETING:

Decisions shall be taken on any issue by a simple majority vote on a show of hands unless otherwise stated. The President having the casting vote.

15. VOTING RIGHTS:

Life members	:	One vote
Ordinary members	:	One vote
Institutional members	:	One vote
Student members	:	One vote
Honorary members	:	One vote
Ex-officio members	:	One vote

16. NEW PROVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING PROVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION:

A proposition to establish a new provision in the constitution or to amend to delete an existing provision shall not be carried except by a special resolution of which twenty one days notice containing a copy of the proposition shall be given to members and passed by the three fourths majority of members present in person, or by proxy at a General Meeting.

17. TRUSTEES:

a. The President, Honorary Secretary and the Vice-President shall be Trustees of the property and assets of the Association.

b. Any trustee who shall cease to be a member of the Executive Committee shall ipso facto be discharged from his office as Trustee and the Executive Committee may forthwith appoint another member of the Executive Committee to take his place as a Trustee of the Association.

c. All the property of the Association movable and immovable shall vest in the Trustees for the use and benefit of the Association and all documents relating to and effecting the movable property and investments of the Association shall be taken and stand in the name of the Association, and all documents relating to the immovable properties and investment of the Association shall be executed by the Trustees for and on behalf of the Association unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee.

d. The Trustees shall invest the capital funds of the Association and shall realise or re-invest such capital funds in accordance with the direction of the Executive Committee.

18. DISSOLUTION:

a. The Association shall not be dissolved except at the Extraordinary General Meeting by a special resolution not less than three fourths of the members present and by proxy voting for the resolution.

b. A special committee consisting of not less than five members shall be constituted to effect the dissolution.

c. If upon the dissolution of the Association there shall remain after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, this shall not be paid or distributed among the members or any one of them, but, shall be given to some other similar registered Society as determined by a special resolution.

19. INDEMNITY:

Every member of the Committee and every officer of the Association shall be indemnified out of the funds of the Association against reasonable loss and expenses incurred in the discharge of his duties hereunder, except such as shall happen through his own wilful negligence, default or fraud.

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